



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 155

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2009

No. 46

House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 17, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable SHEILA JACKSON-LEE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOEHNER. I welcome my colleagues to St. Patrick's Day and I hope everyone has a happy one.

Madam Speaker, we are 2 months into this Congress, and Washington has done nothing to ease the economic challenges facing middle class families and small businesses.

We've watched the administration approve another \$350 billion for more bailouts for the financial industry, and we've watched passage of a trillion-dollar "stimulus" bill, and then we've

watched the passage of a \$410 billion omnibus bill loaded with some 9,000 unscrutinized earmarks.

Soon we are going to debate the President's budget, a budget which spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much from our kids and our grandkids. This budget raises taxes on everyone, from middle class families to small businesses, to seniors and to schools. It even punishes anyone who would have the audacity to flip on a light switch thanks to a brand new \$646 billion energy tax. This means less money in the family budget and more jobs being shipped overseas.

The American people are looking for real solutions that will help create jobs, rebuild savings, and create more investment in our economy. And in spite of what some disingenuous political operatives are saying, Republicans are offering better solutions.

So far this year, we've presented clear, superior alternatives to Washington Democrats' flawed proposals. We've asked the administration for an exit strategy to get the government back out of the private sector and get taxpayers off the hook for more billions in handouts to the financial sector. Our whip, ERIC CANTOR, and I personally delivered to the President an economic recovery plan that would create twice as many jobs as the Democrats' plan at half the cost. And we fought for a spending freeze as the majority fought for their bloated \$410 billion omnibus spending bill.

Listen, the American people are fed up with what they're seeing here in Washington. Don't they deserve to keep more of what they earn as we try to get this economy back on track? Don't they deserve better solutions than the spending, taxing, and borrowing that they're seeing out of this Congress?

Republicans are offering better solutions, and we hope the majority will join us.

THE CONTINUED NEED FOR HEALTH REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I would like to just take this opportunity to wish all of my colleagues and the American people, particularly my constituents, a happy St. Patrick's Day.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on an issue that continues to be a top priority for American families and businesses, one that is fundamentally intertwined with the strength of our Nation's economy and the government's long-term fiscal sustainability. I'm speaking, of course, about the need for health care reform.

Health care costs in the United States are rising at an alarming rate. Yet despite the fact that we spend more per capita on health care than any other industrialized country, we produce some of the worst outcomes by a number of important health measures. Furthermore, the U.S. remains the only developed nation that does not guarantee health coverage as a right to its citizens.

Recent estimates indicate that over 45 million Americans lack health insurance, leaving one in six without access to proper medical care. Even more shocking is that over 80 percent of the uninsured come from working families. Health care costs are imposing an increasing burden on families and placing employers at a further competitive disadvantage in our global economy.

Now, as we seek to unfurl the complex economic challenges facing our country, it remains abundantly clear that our success will not only depend on our ability to stem housing foreclosures and create new jobs; it will also depend on our will to change a system of health care that is fundamentally flawed and under tremendous strain.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H3441